

INNOVATIONS IN RS EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

**"Winds of Change", The NSCAT CD-ROM
ORAL PRESENTATION****Dr. Gilbert Yanow**

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The NASA Scatterometer (NSCAT) Project has taken a bold new step in the development of an educational outreach product. NSCAT is an Instrument aboard the Japanese ADEOS satellite. It uses a special radar system to determine wind speed and direction over the world's oceans. Traditionally, projects such as this have technical writers produce educational materials that specialize on the science and technology of the mission. Quite often these materials are of little or no use to the classroom teacher.

The NSCAT project formed a "Core Team" composed of classroom teachers, California State Dept. of Education curriculum experts, curriculum developers and JPL technical personnel. Together, this group, using the educational "web" developed by Mr. Bruce Payne, developed a "point and click" curriculum resource CD-ROM for the subject of Global Weather, primarily aimed at the middle school level. This resource is designed to be used in a thematic, inter-disciplinary approach to education, with authentic assessment for the students.

"Winds of Change" has been critically evaluated by the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) and received high marks on its educational value and approach. McREL also aligned the materials (written backgrounds, written activities, still graphics and movies) with a compendium of national USA benchmarks and the USA National Research Council Science Standards.

The response by the thousands of teachers who have received the CD-ROM are also positive. At the moment extensive support materials, such as the alignments, special data sets prepared for use in the classroom and a teacher user forum are being prepared for presentation on the NSCAT Home Page.